595 They have as many wives as they want, especially the chiefs and their children. They even have them on different islands. The wives live in separate little huts and sleep with their husbands in succession, one during one month, the other the next month. The one who is sleeping with the husband serves him during this time and follows him [549] everywhere, even to sea. If they surprise their wives in adultery or if the wives become pregnant by another man, they usually kill them, even though they sometimes leave them for two or three years without going to see them. The men are free to leave their wives, [597] and [534] the wives may then remarry; but the wives do not have the right to [552] leave their husbands. Even though the husband may have several wives, these are hardly jealous, except perhaps rarely.

606 The husband never speaks to the father, mother, and brothers of his wife, unless they are drunk or are children. If he meets them on the same path, he avoids them by making a big detour. If necessity obliges them to speak, as when they are at sea, they turn their faces 585 away and cut the conversation short. They use no ceremony at all for their marriage. If the girl does not already belong to the man, [532] as the cousin issued from the [mother's] sister, he asks for her from the father or mother. They do not know what it is to speak of love. [533] They rarely marry without the consent of their father or mother. The men do not sleep with their wives unless they are really nubile and 846 capable of having children. When the wives are delivered of child, the husbands separate from them and they do not sleep together for five or six months. And they both fast— it is one of their most famous fasts—especially when their first child is a boy. The man fasts more rigorously than the woman, lest the child suffer. Father Raymond being at the home of The Baron at Dominica, went to see one of these fasters and as the Father spoke to him of this fast, the Carib told him that some men completely abstain from drinking and eating for the first five days after a childbirth by their wives, and then take nothing but some ouicou from the sixth to tenth days. After that they eat nothing but cassava and drink ouicou for the period of a month or two. Note that they eat nothing but the heart of the cassava and hang the rest with a cord for the feast. It is true that when they begin to eat, they eat and drink when they want, but nothing more than cassava and ouicou. When the day of the feast arrives, their friends assemble and one slashes the skin of the father's whole body with agouti teeth,

852 cut and the nose, ears, and lower lip are pierced if the child was too weak to have it done when he was very small.

852 When the boys are fairly large they eat with their fathers, and the girls eat with their mothers. The parents teach them no sort of manners and they say neither good morning, good evening, nor thank you. They are brought up in such liberty that they do only what they want, obeying their parents at their whim. The parents do not punish them. The mothers mistreat them sometimes but only in a fury or when vexed, and not to correct them.

851 When the girls begin to menstruate, they are made to fast one or two months. So are the boys when they attain their adolescence, and they are slashed with agouti teeth, as we shall indicate when we discuss their drinking parties.

768 When the father dies or leaves his wife all the children stay with
586 the mother and she takes care of them, while the husband does not bother about them any more.

578 There are women among the Caribs who become prostitutes. There
834 are no indecent words among them. Young and old, boys and girls, all call things by their names without any shame whatsoever.

CHAPTER VII

The Huts, Beds, and Pirogues of The Caribs

361 Since they have many enemies who often kidnap them, the Caribs live at Capesterre because there the approach is more difficult and more rarely leeward of the wind for the anchorage of the boats by which they fear being surprised.

621 They are divided into families, and these families are composed of several households which live to gether and form a sort of hamlet under the father of the family. The father's sons and daughters are
342 married and live in their own huts. They first make a large common hall [827] 60, 80, or 100 feet long, more or less, which they call a carbet. Around this large hut they build small ones for individual families.

These huts are made with forked branches stuck in the ground, joined with other pieces of wood which go from one fork to another.

854 the mouths of their babies. Reaching the age of three or four months they crawl on hands and feet all over the house just like small dogs. They wallow in the dust and roll unceasingly on the soil and they accustom themselves so well on all fours that when they are adults they run as fast in this way as the French do upright. When their strength allows it they /infants/ stand up, falling more often then they walk. It is amazing to see them continually falling on their hands or on their behinds.

26i They all eat earth, the mother as well as the children. The cause of such an irregular appetite can be explained to my satisfaction only by an excess of melancholy, which is the predominate humor among all Caribs. This is so true that they find as much delight and satisfaction in eating chalk as they do in eating sugar.

854 The mothers tenderly love their children and are always on guard to ward off anything harmful which might happen to them. They almost always hold them suspended at the breast. When they go to sleep at night in their awkward hammocks it is amazing that they never smother their children, for they often go to bed completely drunk and out of their mind. They /mothers/ are rarely separated from their children and in all trips by sea or land they carry them under their arm in a small cotton hammock which is slung from their shoulder in order that they will always have in front of their eyes the object of their care.

● 536 If it happens that the husband leaves his wife, she keeps all of the children and she never gives any of them to him unless she is compelled by force to do so. Children who have been abandoned by their father help their mother and provide subsistence. When the children are older, if they are boys they follow the father and eat with him. If they are girls they follow the mother and eat with her. All of the
861 children, boys as well as girls, are raised by their mothers and fathers more as if they were beasts than as rational beings. They do not teach them to be either civil or honorable. They do not even learn to say good morning, or good evening, nor to thank people for small favors. As a result of this training they don't honor their parents either in words or in respectful attitudes. If they obey their parents' commands this comes more from whim than from the respect which they bear them. This wildness of behavior continues among the children, since

595 The wife who is living with her husband during this month is obliged to prepare for him all the necessities. She makes bread for him and serves him as her master, painting him red and combing his hair every day. If he needs to travel she accompanies him everywhere during his trip. Since the love for their wives is unequal, the visits are sometimes not so evenly regulated. The husbands let whole years elapse without living with some of their wives. But if the wife is the daughter of a captain, he is interested in his child and threatens his son-in-law that he will take back his daughter and give her to someone else. If the wife is deceived and seduced by the wiles and promise of a lover and if her sin, done secretly, is discovered by her husband, he sometimes forgives his wife but never the wife's lover. [694]
586 They like to be as free to abandon their wives as they are to chose them, and this is the reason why they leave them whenever they please. The wives do not have the same right and need their husbands' consent. If a man marries a slave he has captured in war, she is included among his wives, but she always has her hair cut like that of a boy. Often when they have taken their pleasure they strike their captured women with a boutou—which is a kind of club and is their ordinary weapon—and by hitting them on the head send them to the next world as their only reward. Nevertheless, this is rather rare and we have seen several of them, especially old men, who tenderly loved their young slaves and the children of such, who enjoyed the same condition as the man's other children. 593 567

146 There is no doubt at all that the female animals in our islands have a shorter gestation period than in Europe. I have neither noticed nor heard that women are affected in this way. However, the women are capable of having children earlier and they stop bearing children later than European women. If one looks into the register of Guadeloupe he will find the name of an old Carib woman called Madame, who is one hundred years old, and she has a daughter who is five years old. I have seen the woman and child. Her age is only conjectural, yet it is certain that she could not have been less than eighty years old when she gave birth to the child.

The Reverend Jesuit Father Chemel let me know several facts in letters which he did me the honor of writing, and which prove what now follows: He told me that at the time he lived in the islands a

5: Rouse E-4 (no date) 1948 ST13 Callinago ST13 (1650-1700)

868 to be so accurate that they could hit a bough. The girls learned from their mothers how to cook, till the fields, weave cotton, and make hammocks.

881 **Puberty and marriage.**—At the age of puberty both sexes fasted for 3 or 4 weeks and had their skins scarified with agouti teeth. This was the time when the girls assumed the aprons and cotton anklets of women. Thereafter they were not allowed to run free but had to remain close to their mothers.

The youths were taught to value courage and endurance and were periodically rubbed with the fat of slaughtered *Arawak* to make them brave. When they had reached the age of becoming warriors they were tested in these qualities. The youth having been seated on a stool in the center of the carbet, his father crushed a bird over his head, scarified his body, and rubbed the cuts with pepper sauce. Then the boy ate the heart of the bird, to give himself courage, and his father beat him. He had to endure this entire ceremony without flinching. When it was over he lay in a hammock and fasted for 3 days. Then he demonstrated his skill in wielding a club and was accepted into the company of the warriors, being given a new name. His father gave a feast in celebration.

[756] Specialization in shamanism began in childhood, when the candidate abstained from several kinds of flesh and underwent rigorous fasts. At puberty he was apprenticed to one of the older shamans, after going through a scarification ceremony comparable to that given to warriors.

582 The *Carib* youth were supposed to be chaste. Except for prostitutes,
[837] contact between young men and young women was tabooed. So was marriage with mothers, sisters, and step-sisters. Cross-cousin marriage was preferred, the sororate also being practiced, but a man was allowed other wives as well. Fathers presented their daughters to the successful
584 warriors at the feast following each raid, and the warriors could also marry the women they had taken captive during the raid. The men with the most wives were considered the most prominent.

Girls often became engaged during childhood and sometimes were brought up by their fiancé's family. The groom usually had to obtain
[595] the consent of the prospective bride's parents. There was no ceremony
591 except for an occasional feast, the only time the wife ever ate with her husband. Residence was matrilocal, except in the case of a chief. Each wife lived in a separate hut in her own village, often on a different island.
562 The wives were treated as servants; they dressed and fed their husbands,
● [586] cleaned and thatched the houses, tilled the fields, and carried all burdens. Their husbands could abandon them without ceremony, in which case the younger children remained with the mother and the older children were
[551] divided according to sex. Teknonymy was practiced, and a man had to avoid speaking to his wife's relatives.

888 **Death and burial.**—The *Carib* sometimes killed the old and the infirm.
000 They feared the dead and never mentioned their names. When a man

11: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1946

ST13 Callinago ST13

boémę *crown* ?], puis on les en frotte partout oú ils sont incisez, pensez s'ils ont froid! Pour les restorer on leur donne à manger le coeur de leur oyseau seullement; et crainte qu'il ne leur cause quelque indigestion, dès les grand matin, ils vont à un canari plein d'infusion de tabac, qu'ils boivent à longs traits, et qui leur fait rendre tripes et boudins.

Entre tous les conviés il y en a 6 ou 8 qui se frottent tout le corps de gomme d'Elemie [*Dacryodes excelsa* Vahl] encore liquide et degouttante de l'arbre, à laquelle on attache du duvet, ou petites plumes du festu-en-queue [*Phaeton aethereus*], et on couronne leurs testes de grandes plumes d'Arras, puis on les fait danser, deux à deux, autour du Carbet, l'un estendant son bras droit sur les epaulles de l'autre, et l'autre sa gauche autour du col de son compagnon. Les autres suivent en la meme posture, et en dansant deux à deux jusque a ce qu'ils soient arrivez au lieu où ils trouvent des grandes callebasses pleines d'oüicou, qu'il faut avaller jusqu' à la derniere goutte, encore qu'ils en deussent crever.

Other authors tell us that the "gligli" and "malfini" hawks were the birds usually employed in these rites; that the heart was dried over the fire before it was eaten, and the feet often set aside to be worn in an amulet; that the initiate's head and neck were anointed with oil; and that water, and tobacco and roku *(Bixa orellana)* leaves, as well as *Capsicum*, were crushed up with the bird's body to be rubbed on the men's backs.

No official form of divorce is recorded, but there is plenty of evidence to show that separation and remarriage of wives took place, consequent upon incompetence, neglect, or desertion on the part of the husband. Children always remained, in such cases, with the mother. Widows and widowers were free to remarry when and whom they pleased.

As soon as they are dead [says Breton] they paint them red [with roku], comb them, and, if they are of consequence, wrap them in a fine cotton bed, and in the middle of the hut dig a round hole of a depth proportionate to the posture they give them (which is that which they had in their mother's womb) [Labat says: "seated on a little stool, elbows on knees and chin in cupped hands"] into which they are lowered onto a piece of board placed there, then covered with another such onto which earth is thrown and tears shed, the while they sing their sorrow and lament in a lugubrious tone. This they continue last thing in the evening and at daybreak in the morning for some time. They do not forget their custom of putting bread and wine [cassava-cakes and wiku] on the grave, nor to light a fire all around it for quite a time. After a year they return to weep, remove the boards, throw and trample down earth upon the decayed body, drink the rest of the day and night, and sometimes quit the house and habitation, as I saw them do after the death of their captain, Henri Comte.

Personal belongings, other than those buried with the deceased, usually were burnt.

11: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1946
ST13 Callinago ST13

591 (1) Father; mother; married daughter, her husband and their children; two
592 unmarried daughters, both with children; one unmarried son.
Three other married daughters have separate establishments in the immediate vicinity, as does one married son. Another married son lives with his wife's family some miles away, and one married daughter lives with her husband's people.

(2) Widowed mother; married daughter, her husband, and their children; widowed son; grandson (the latter is the son of another married daughter who has a separate neighboring establishment).
The widowed son's children live with their maternal grandmother.

(3) Father; mother; mother's pre-marital married daughter with her pre-marital son and her husband; mother's pre-marital son; unmarried daughter and her children; son; small son; small daughter.

● 586 Legal divorce is unknown to these Caribs, though they apply the word "divorce" to any separation between couples married legally or otherwise, of which there are several examples. In one case the wife left her husband because of ill-treatment; in another the husband abandoned his wife and fled to Guadeloupe (where he remarried) because he was in trouble with the English law; while yet another husband "divorced" because he could not get on with his wife's mother. Separation on grounds of sexual infidelity is very rare—chiefly because such a reason is considered too trivial to break up the union. Widows and widowers are free to remarry as and when they please.

585 Newly married couples as such are subject to no special restrictions, nor is
[606] there any formal avoidance of parents-in-law. Customs and beliefs affecting
[846] behavior at the menstrual period, during pregnancy, and after childbirth have been discussed in another paper.[7] In as far as the latter concern the father as well as the mother, they show vestiges of the couvade.

847 As illegitimate children and their parents are in no way stigmatized, abortion
844 is rare and generally condemned (although on account of changing economic conditions it appears to be now on the increase). Parturition takes place in a
[827] crouching position, usually with the aid of the parturient's mother or of some old sage-femme, who employs massage and various herbal teas or potions (such as a draught of a boy's urine) if she considers it necessary to hasten labor. When
[304] she has cut and bound the navel cord, and bathed the child, the sage-femme (or maternal grandmother) takes the infant on her lap, and inserts a finger under

7 Douglas Taylor, *Carib Folk-Beliefs and Customs from Dominica, B. W. I.* (Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, vol. 1, pp. 507-530, 1945), p. 519.